

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 612

By Cepicky

A RESOLUTION to honor and recognize Harris-Jones Farm on being named the 2023 Maury County Alliance Century Farm of the Year.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly salute that most noble agricultural institution, the family farm, which serves as a cornerstone for our rural communities while providing food and fiber for Tennessee and beyond; and

WHEREAS, one such noteworthy farm is the Harris-Jones Farm in Maury County, which is still owned and operated by members of the Harris and Jones family today and has been honored as the 2023 Maury County Alliance Century Farm of the Year; and

WHEREAS, with more than 160 acres of land, the Harris-Jones Farm was part of a land grant to John and Green Dillehay, who moved to Maury County from North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, consisting of several tracts, the Jones tract of the farm dates back to 1923 with Melissa Jones's grandfather, Leslie Eddlemon, and the Harris tract dates back to 1915 when it was purchased by Byron F. (BF) and Mary Lou Dillehay Harris; and

WHEREAS, William Monroe (Bill) Harris and Elaine Eddlemon were neighbors as children, and in 1956, the two married and inherited their respective family farms, which became a large 300-acre farm; they became stewards of the land in 1973 and have since passed it on to their children; and

WHEREAS, prior to marrying, Bill Harris was an officer in the Maury County FFA Chapter, served as State FFA Secretary, and won the American Farmer Award in 1946; he was also honored by the Columbia Kiwanis Club with the Gold Star Farmer Award in 2013; and

WHEREAS, Bill and Elaine Harris were widely known for their beef cattle, although they also milked cows and raised other commodities, such as corn and tobacco; and

WHEREAS, many farmers in Maury County knew Bill Harris from his thirty-one years of service at the local co-op, during which time he continued to farm, milk the cows twice daily, and research each product sold at the co-op; in 1988, at the age of fifty-nine, he returned to working exclusively as a farmer; and

WHEREAS, the life and duties of a farmer were not without "set-backs" as Bill Harris called them; his father-in-law, Rufus Dillehay, lost his leg while milking cows, and he himself suffered from a broken back and crushed eye socket due to a round hay bale and later broke his leg during a confrontation with one of the bulls; and

WHEREAS, Bill and Elaine Harris were blessed with two daughters, Melissa and Cindy; Melissa married Randy Jones, who ultimately won the affections of his in-laws by helping on the farm and performing mechanic work, and with their union, the farm became the Harris-Jones Farm; and

WHEREAS, Melissa and Randy Jones share a daughter, Jessica, who lives on a tract of the farm with her family, and a son, Alex, who dedicates his time and skills to remodeling the farmhouse where Bill Harris was born and lived his entire life; Melissa and Randy Jones continue to farm the land with approximately 200 stocker calves; and

WHEREAS, additionally, the Harris's daughter Cindy and her husband, Winfred Baker, share two sons, William and Robert; and

WHEREAS, today, the Harris-Jones farm sits on Culleoka Highway and Greasy Branch Road, which was, according to legend, named after the hogs placed in the creek by German settlers; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to acknowledge and applaud the members of the Harris and Jones families for their dedication to agriculture, recognizing the importance of the family farm to our rural communities and the State of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby recognize and honor the members of the Harris and Jones family, both past and present, upon Harris-Jones Farm being named the 2023 Maury County Alliance Century Farm of the Year in recognition of its contributions to agriculture and Tennessee's history and heritage, and we extend to these fine citizens our best wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.